

May 21: 1749

1749  
A

W. Cooke  
Peter Anne  
D. G. C. G.  
Nath. Highmore

# LETTER

TO THE

*Lord Viscount B-----KE,*

[ Price Six-pence. ]

*Bank Coffee House*

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LETTER  
TO THE  
*Lord Viscount B-----KE.* K  
Occasion'd by his TREATMENT  
OF A  
Deceased FRIEND.



Printed for A. MOORE, near St. Paul's.

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A

LETTER  
TO THE  
*Lord Viscount B-----KE.*

My L O R D,

I Will make no Apology for the Freedom of this Address to your Lordship. The TREATMENT you have given, or suffer'd to be given, to so eminent, and in many Respects so worthy a Person as the late Mr. POPE ; one too,

too, who while living was in so distin-  
guish'd a manner your Friend, will  
justify me in endeavouring to make my  
Regard for his Memory as public, as  
you have endeavour'd to make your  
Resentment against him. And though  
I doubt not but the genuine Lustre  
of his Character will soon disperse the  
Cloud which seems at present to hang  
over him, and to obscure his Merits; yet  
I shall not pretend to vindicate him so far  
as entirely to justify his Behaviour to your  
Lordship on this Occasion. Appearances  
are indeed against him. But as he is dead,  
what he might have been able to alledge  
in Vindication of himself, his Friends  
cannot say; and therefore his Enemies,  
if they had either Generosity or even  
common Charity, should have been silent.  
But in order to give your Lordship's  
Anger as strong a Plea as the Nature of  
the

the Case will admit, I will for a Moment set this Matter in the worst Light it can possibly bear. I will suppose, that his *Inducement to commit this Breach of Trust, was the Love of Money*; and that the *Alterations he had taken the Liberty of making, were such as would have spoil'd your Performance.* Admitting, I say, for a Moment, this to have been the Case, yet, *humanum est errare*, and Mr. POPE was but a Man; why should your Lordship expect him to be perfect? Are you acquainted with any human Heart that is so? I doubt not. Did no one ever before betray his Trust? I fear your Lordship wou'd be very singular in your Opinion should you affirm it. Besides, is it the Office of Friendship, after all the Faults and Failings of ones Friend have been bury'd in the Grave for five long Years, to rake them up from his

Ashes,

Ashes, and with all the Bitterness of Malice and Ill-nature expose them to the World? Surely, my Lord, to have lamented in Silence, to have pity'd and endeavour'd to conceal the Faults of so considerable a Man, and once so dear a Friend, would have been a Behaviour much more generous, much more candid and humane. But *there is a Friend, says Solomon, who being turned to Enmity and Strife will discover thy Reproach*; and it hath been the Ill-Fortune of Mr. POPE to meet with such a Friend as this in your Lordship.

As to the other Part of the Supposition, viz. *that the Alterations which Mr. POPE had taken the Liberty of making, were such as would have spoilt your Performance*; tho' this is a Supposition which few would make besides yourself, yet

*you will not be the only one to make this.*

this, to a Person of your Lordship's Indifference about your Fame and Reputation as an Author, one would have thought a Misfortune very easy to be borne; but as by the Honesty of Mr. POPE's Printer, that spurious Edition has been prevented from spreading; so your Character as a Writer, has sustain'd no Injury, and your Resentment on that Account might therefore well have been spar'd; especially against a Friend, who when all others forsook you, alone stood up in your Defence, and from a few of whose Lines you will probably receive more lasting Honour from Posterity, than all your own Works, tho' I can allow them great Merit, will ever procure you.

But your Lordship will please to remember, it was only for a Moment that I admitted these Things. It is very im-

probable, and I can by no Means believe, that Avarice was Mr. POPE's Motive for printing these Pieces. Would an avaricious Man lay out his Money in such a manner, as that it should lie dead by him for several Years and produce him no Interest ? Yet this was the Case, if it be true, as I suppose it is, that Mr. POPE paid for the Paper and the Printing of that Edition. If he had intended this kind of Injury to your Lordship, would he not have contrived some Method or other, to have publish'd this Impression, and have received the Money for it ? This might easily have been done, and he have remained concealed : but it does not appear that he had any such Design. What indeed was his real Motive or Inducement to this Proceeding, unless he was alive to tell us, seems difficult to determine. *Common Candour*, however, after

a Per-

a Person was dead, and unable to answer for himself, would have led most Men to put any favorable Construction they could upon such an Affair ; *Good-Nature* and *Humanity*, would have endeavoured to forget it ; and true *Friendship* would have used all possible Means to have stifled and concealed it : but it has been the hard Lot of this great unhappy Man, to be treated, immediately after his Death, and by those from whom he might have expected at least some small Indulgence to his Failings, with neither *Friendship*, *Humanity*, *Good-Nature*, nor even *common Candour*.

Yet shall his Verse to future Age pretend,  
THOU wert his Guide, Philosopher, and Friend.

And after all, my Lord, surely one may ask (for it does not appear) *cui bono* ?

B 2 To

To what good End or Purpose can this cruel Treatment of your Friend conduce? Had he been alive, it might perhaps have been consider'd as a proper Punishment; but as he is dead, it cannot be look'd upon but as an Outrage; an Outrage as barbarous, as it was unnecessary. And tho' you had not a Heart to forgive him (as indeed those who have most need of Forgiveness themselves, are often least ready to forgive others) yet one would have thought a proper Regard to yourself would have prevented you from exposing the Man, on whose moral Character your own will in a great Measure depend. For if Mr. POPE has been unjust to your Lordship in one Respect, he may have been so in another: and then what Credit are we to give to all the fine Things, which he has said of your Lordship?

But

But I am aware of an Objection. Your Lordship may perhaps alledge, that whatever has been said against *the Man*, must be plac'd to the Account of your EDITOR; the Advertisement prefix'd being not *yours* but *his*. I own there is a Pertness, a Petulancy in it, that would naturally lead one to place it much below your Lordship: but as you have suffer'd it to go along with your Work, you have made yourself in some Measure answerable for the Ill-nature and Inhumanity which produced it. However, I will suppose at present, that it is not yours, but the Production of your worthy *Editor*; a Fellow, who, while Mr. POPE liv'd, was as diligent in licking his Feet, as he is now in licking your Lordship's; and who, for the sake of giving himself an Air of Importance in being join'd with you; and for the Vanity

nity of saying — *The Author and I* — *The Editor and he* — has sacrific'd all his Pretensions (indeed they were but small) to Friendship, Honour, and Humanity. And what Pretence has *this Man* to abuse Mr. POPE? has *He* received any Injury from him? No; but he may possibly have suspected or found out that in the famous + *Apollo Vision*, Mr. POPE only laugh'd at him: and this I must own,   
 would

+ 'Tis probable this hint alludes to the following Story: The Editor, being in Company with the Person to whom Mr. Pope has consign'd the care of his Works, and who he thought had some intention of writing Mr. Pope's Life, told him he had an Anecdote which he believ'd nobody knew but himself. I was sitting one Day, said he, with Mr. Pope in his last Illness, who coming suddenly out of a Reverie, which you know he frequently fell into at that time, and fixing his Eyes steadfastly upon me, Mr. M — said he, I have had an odd kind of Vision: Methought, I saw my own Head open, and *Apollo* came out of it; I then saw your Head open, and *Apollo* went into it; after which our Heads clos'd up again. The Gentleman could not help smiling at his Vanity, and with some Humour reply'd, why, Sir, if I had an Intention of writing *your* Life, this might perhaps be a proper Anecdote, but I don't see that in Mr. Pope's it will be of any consequence at all.

would be sufficient to excite some Wrath in a much less irritable Animal than your important Editor. I can conceive no other Reason for his Behaviour than this ; unless one may suppose that so great a Soul can be moved by pecu... Motives.

But I will leave *this Man* to the Upbraidings of his own Conscience, which he must feel ; and to the Ridicule and Scorn of the World, which he must bear : and if either *you* or *he* complain that you are attack'd by a *nameless* Author, it might be a sufficient Answer, that you have join'd your Efforts in attacking a *dead* one. But to justify myself for meddling in this Affair, let it suffice, that *the Man*, whom I think you have abused, was my Friend ; while living, I lov'd and honour'd him ; and though dead, I have not lost all Regard to his  
Memory :

Memory: and I shall take Leave of your Lordship, with venturing to foretell you, that the Name of Mr. POEE, in spite of your *unmanly* Endeavours, shall revive and blossom in the Dust, from his Merits; and with presuming to remind you, that yours, had it not been for *his* Genius, *his* Friendship, *his* idolatrous Veneration for you, might in a short Course of Years, have dy'd and been forgotten.

I am, &c.

F. I. N. I. S.